

## **Rotary 17**

### **COMMUNITY NETWORKER**

#### **ROTARY CLUB OF PARRAMATTA CITY, DISTRICT 9675**

[www.parramattacityrotary.org.au](http://www.parramattacityrotary.org.au)

#### **Rotary Four-Way Test**

The Four-Way Test challenges Rotarians, in everything they do, to ask themselves:

Of the things we say or do:

1. Is it the **TRUTH**?
2. Is it **FAIR** to all concerned?
3. Will it build **GOODWILL** and **BETTER FRIENDSHIPS**?

#### **Meeting 3 February 2014**

##### **Keith's Introduction**

President Keith, fresh from holidays, welcomed Sangheetha Bobba, general practitioner, who is making a second visit to Rotary, and there are high hopes that she likes it and will become a member. Keith reminded us that the District Conference was less than four weeks away and that club members should register to go. Thirteen of our members had registered for the Rotary International Convention and it would be very welcome news to hear that more of our members were registering. Members should look at the latest annual report of Rotary International, especially the highlights section. [2012-13 Rotary International and The Rotary Foundation Annual Report](#). He said the material was "extremely interesting and easy to read". He had discovered that in terms of per capita contribution to the Rotary Foundation, Australian Rotary was the fifth-highest in the world. He said there would be a club barbecue during the convention and the club's barbecue trailer had been volunteered for that day. The club would need to provide barbecue volunteers. On 3 June, the Tuesday night of the convention, there would be a program in Parramatta to which international guests were invited. Keith was planning to have some people from Zambia here as well as from our sister club in the Philippines.

##### **Message from our Sister Club**

29 January

Dear Keith,

Thank you for updating us on you club activities. And also on your much needed vacation. Our recently concluded Midyear Review report kept us all busy especially so because we were the host club in this district event. And with the dedication &

perseverance of Sdg Ramil the event was a tremendous success with 99% in attendance. There were slight problems we encountered but immediately solved.

We attended the District Chinese New Year celebration last night with 3 members of RC RAMON MAGSAYSAY.

These were the only District events so far this month of January . And on Friday, during our club regular meeting , we will discuss our next projects - one will be the shipment of carpentry tools to the area affected by the recent typhoon,

I will keep you posted regarding the development of this project.

Lastly, please give my regards to all the RC PARAMATTA CITY members and to your family circle.

Yours in Rotary service

Mina

President RC of Ramon Magsaysay

### **The Barbecue**

Past-president Johnny Ching said that for the Australia Day Barbecue at Parramatta Park had been successful, with John Stamboulie excelling himself as the town crier to get more customers. Something had gone wrong with the mushrooms so we were unable to supply them but other items had sold well and with the float deducted, along with the expenses, we should realise a profit of between \$1,500 and \$1,800. The leftovers, comprising bread rolls and onions, had been willingly received by the Northcott Centre. Bob Rosengreen said the crowds had been down on previous years and the result was “not terrific but OK”.

### **Barefoot Bowls**

There will be no lunchtime meeting on Monday, 10 February. Instead, we will be attending a Barefoot Bowls night at the Parramatta RSL. The function starts at 6 pm but members are advised to go a little earlier to avoid the rush of people to sign in at that time. Partners and friends are welcome. The event starts at 6.30 pm.

### **Riding Bikes**

John Surian has returned from South Australia where he and a group called “Never Quit” travelled with their bikes to watch the Tour Down Under and watched Cadel Evans glide by as only the professionals can do. But John and his mates were no slouches, chalking up 550 kilometres by cycling to the towns the tour went through. The only thing left is that club members should all rise at 4 am and accompany John on his training rides round Parramatta Park, if not by riding then jogging.

## **Australian Rotary Health Golf Day**

President Keith said the Golf Day for Australian Rotary Health was coming up on Wednesday, 26 February, at the Riverside Oaks Golf Resort on the Hawkesbury. Our club had had a team of four for the event last year and he was wondering whether we could have a repeat performance. The ticket for the day was \$200 which included lunch and tea. There would also be a competition where someone could buy a golf ball for \$10. That ball, along with other bought balls, would be taken aloft by helicopter and dropped above the green at the 18<sup>th</sup> hole. The golf ball nearest the pin took the prize. At present, our club had 10 tickets. The proceeds went to Australian Rotary Health.

## **Barry Antees**

District Governor-elect Barry Antees, having just returned from a District Governors' training course in San Diego, California, was full of beans and bursting with enthusiasm to take over his job as DG of District 9675 when Garry Brown steps down on 1 July. Barry said a theme he would have to work on was "Lighting Up Rotary". He was looking at areas he could reach into within the district. Awareness of Rotary and membership would be a priority. Barry said he would be very focused on the Rotary Foundation and Australian Rotary Health. One of the fund-raising projects he had in mind was a "Night of a Thousand Diners". Rotarians would invite 10 people to dinner, give them a video presentation on Rotary and ask them to donate \$10 on the basis that "this is where your \$10 goes". It would then be put to those present whether they would consider going further and attending a meeting of a club. The video presentation would also be useful in getting new speakers, which was important for clubs that were struggling to make up numbers in that regard.

"We will focus on members, getting members and retaining members," Barry said. There would be workshops in the district, which would be open to new members attending. It would show them how to get involved in Rotary and give them the knowledge they did not necessarily get in their own clubs. Barry said another idea was to replace the traditional "Schoolies Week", which involved drinking and misbehaviour, with a program that would take school leavers to places like Cambodia where they could work for a period as volunteers. "It would give parents a sense of relief and kids a sense of direction," he said. Barry would be asking club members to get involved in projects. He would be using the then president, Ron Edgar, to facilitate that, and Secretary Joy would be taking on the job of "Governor's Aide". "She will with me during the journey," he said. Her job would involve liaising with assistant governors throughout the district and to coordinate activities to achieve the goals that had been set.

One item that would require special attention would be the district conference that would be held in Canberra on 14-16 November. That would not leave much lead-up time. Normally there would be 12 months lead-up but not this time, and as the next district conference would be next month, there was not much lead-up time at all. He

would like to see members of the club get out and market the district conference. There were clubs that Parramatta could not normally reach, such as in the Illawarra and eastern suburbs, that needed to be reached. Getting in touch with them would allow opportunities to meet new people and develop some partnerships. Barry would like to use the special skills some Rotarians possessed, such as marketing. He said there would be “Future Leaders” seminar. The conference would be about youth for the future and how they could be an inspiration. There would be some key speakers, such as “Twiggy” Forrest, the mining magnate from Western Australia. There would also be the Young Australian of the Year, a refugee from Afghanistan, who had done valuable work with Australian indigenous people and with migrants. And there would be two young adventurers who had gone kayaking in Antarctica.



Barry Antees on mission

## **Fund Raising**

Glenn Gardner had put on his thinking cap about how to get in more money. One idea was to hold a dinner with guests at Vandana's Ginger restaurant in Harris Park. There would be a guest speaker, possibly Patrick Milligan, brother of Spike, who would give more than an insight into the world of goonery.

Another idea would be to have a business lunch, again with an extended audience, at one of the Parramatta hotels and to get a top speaker to talk about a business-related topic. But it was necessary in embarking on such projects to get firm support from the club..

Glenn called for a committee to help organise such vents and hands that went up included Philip Brophy, Steve Burford and Natalie Cowell.

## **Community Events**

Philip Brophy said the Red Shield Appeal was coming up on 25 May and he asked whether the Parra-Amble Walk would take place this year.

Ben Jackson said the My Career/Your Career seminar last year had gone well and he thought the club should put it on again. There had been encouraging feedback from the Northcott Centre.

## **Dates for Diaries**

10 February. Barefoot Bowls. There will be no lunchtime meeting.

16 March. Barbecue for a Pink Triathlon at Parramatta Park.

1 March. SHIFT2014 District 9675 Conference

16 March. BBQ Parramatta Park – Triathlon Pink

31 March. Australian Rotary Health PhD Scholars Evening.

5 April. BBQ Bunnings.

12 May. Police Officer of the Year.

25 May. Salvation Army Red Shield Appeal.

3 June. Special Club Night for Rotary International Convention

30 June. Changeover..

## **Apologies and Guests**

Apologies to Joy Gillett on 8837 1900 before 9.30 am on Monday morning.

This is the latest time apologies can be accepted as numbers must to be given to the hotel by this time.

If you are bringing a guest please also advise this to Joy by that time to ensure a meal is prepared.

The Club is required to pay for the number of lunches ordered. Invoices for the cost of a meal will be sent to members by Vandana if you do not apologise for non-attendance by the time stated.

## **Building Rorts**

It is all coming round again. I covered the Gyles Royal Commission into the NSW Building Industry for the *Sydney Morning Herald* from 1989 to 1992 and heard things that made my hair stand on end. They set out to do something permanent about it. They didn't.

The royal commission found all sorts of dishonesty among the construction companies, involving false invoices, collusive tendering, even petty fraud and theft. Some building companies were adding huge amounts, up to perhaps \$250,000, and multiplying it by the number who would be unsuccessful tenderers, so that when the project was awarded the successful tenderer would pay out \$250,000 to its unsuccessful competitors, and the total amount went onto the price. In one notorious petty case, a project manager authorised a variation to the bill for additions to St Vincents Hospital for the Sisters of Charity. But he did not disclose that the variation was for improvements to his own driveway.

But much of the focus of the royal commissions has been on the unions. It was during the Cole Royal Commission (2001 – 2003) as well. I heard years of this – gangsters, violence, bashings, fraud – and in reporting it I came under personal threat. At first the unionists tried to sweet-talk me, to tell me this was all a “Greiner plot” and that it was just an attempt to undermine the hard-won lifestyle of the working man. When I did not respond that that, I was harassed, sued and subject of a unanimous motion by the NSW Labour Council to ask the *Herald* to remove me from coverage of proceedings.

The building unions dug up some “dirt” on Commissioner Gyles, being his shareholding in a non-operating development company, which they leaked to a friendly journalist when the considered the time appropriate. The story as published said it was an active development company. Gyles was stung, rejected accusations of conflict of interest, and was not unseated. The unions had other strings to their bow, being the whole-hearted support of the Labor establishment, including the then NSW ALP Opposition which sneered at the inquiry.

When Gyles recommended that the deregistration of the Building Workers Industrial Union, then incorporated within the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union, the affected unionists laughed and referred the matter all the way up to the

ACTU and Federal Parliamentary Labor Party. A Building Industry Task Force was established in New South Wales to continue Gyles' work but when Labor got into government in New South Wales it went nowhere. The Cole Royal Commission established by the Federal Government sat from 2001 to 2003, went over much the same ground. Cole found many abuses and as a result the Australian Building and Construction Commission was established. It lasted from 2005 to 2012 but the Gillard Government got rid of it.

Now, there is talk of another royal commission, the Labor people, including the leader of the ALP Federal Opposition, Bill Shorten, are back on their hobbyhorse, accusing the Abbott Government of attacking the working people. There will be an inquiry no doubt, and a lot of malfeasance will be revealed. And for a time things will be better. But it won't last. It does not matter how many royal commissions there are, and how many watchdog bodies are established, the industry with its huge costs, huge profits, militant blue collar workforce and fringe criminals, lends itself to exploitation. The bottom line is that a majority of people in the industry have always wanted to screw as much as they can out of it, and will continue to do so. Oh for the Rotary values: "Is it fair to all concerned ...". It remains, in so many cases, just an ideal.

**Malcolm Brown**